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The Microsoft case is a perfect example of the worst kind of action expected out of Washington.

You take a brilliant young man who has a vision no one else has and you allow him to unleash his talents upon the world. He changes the world in a way no one that was possible. He gives the people of the world a gift that they still cannot properly appreciate. His creations give rise to an "information superhighway" that allow people all over the world to do miraculous things. It reminds me of a story of a great architect who has defend his creations against those who use his ideas and then denounce him for those ideas. He utters a line near the end of the story: "Thousands of years ago, the first man discovered how to make fire. He was probably burned at the stake he had taught his brothers to light."

What response can we expect from this? If we eliminate the incentive to be successful in this country by punishing the most successful members of our society, then the weakest will not be pulled by the strongest; the able will descend into mediocrity by the weight of the incompetent. This is the grand image we want to project of America? Of course it is not. We've spent every day since September 11 trying to show the world that we will not go gently into the night. We say that we will fight until the battle is won.

And yet, our hypocritical government continues to condemn its greatest producers on one hand and then hold them up for the world to see on the other. This kind of dichotomy can only exist in the chimera that is our government. This many headed monster that seeks to engulf us with its growth every passing year cannot be allowed to continue.

Microsoft is a powerful company that does everything it can to perpetuate its dominance. What else is it supposed to do. Do we really want them to simply give handouts to the rest of the computer industry so that they can catch up? There is nothing to stop a small upstart company from coming along and doing what Microsoft itself did twenty years ago. Michael Dell had a vision to dance with the big boys, and he, too, started with nothing but an idea that everyone around him called ridiculous. Does Larry Ellison really need the government's help to defeat Microsoft? If this is true, than who should the government's attack really be focused on?

Chris Owen